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THE SOVIET MILITARY VIEWS  
OPERATION DESERT STORM:  
PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

Stephen J. Blank

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<p>Operation Desert Storm, the U.S. led military alliance against Iraq's seizure of Kuwait in 1990-91, is undergoing examination by military analysts across the globe. The war occurred at the same time as the domestic crisis over reform of the Soviet system, and especially its military, was moving to a peak. Accordingly, the Soviet military discussion of the war reveals both the fissures between reformers and conservatives in early 1991 and the 'lessons learned' by Soviet observers concerning modern and future war.</p> <p>Inasmuch as this study was completed before the August revolution that followed the failed coup of August 19, it might seem that such discussions are forever irrelevant. But the strategic problems confronting the military and its civilian critics will not simply go away due to the revolution, though major changes certainly are occurring and will occur. Accordingly the professional Soviet military and its civilian commanders will necessarily sooner or later have to respond to the challenges of war 'in the third dimension' and high-tech conventional strike systems one way or another. Given the sophistication of Soviet military (over)</p>					
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Stephen J. Blank

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## FOREWORD

Operation Desert Storm, the U.S. led military alliance against Iraq's seizure of Kuwait in 1990-91, is undergoing examination by military analysts across the globe. The war occurred at the same time as the domestic crisis over reform of the Soviet system, and especially its military, was moving to a peak. Accordingly, the Soviet military discussion of the war reveals both the fissures between reformers and conservatives in early 1991 and the 'lessons learned' by Soviet observers concerning modern and future war.

These 'lessons' herald the advent of 'future war' involving long-range conventional strike systems deployed hundreds or thousands of miles away from the target and the crucial impact these systems will have. Soviet military observers contend that this war's course and outcome validate the forecasts made a decade or more ago by Marshal Ogarkov and his disciples and confront the Soviet Union with major new threats that consign it to technological and hence strategic inferiority if it does not meet those challenges. The lessons that Soviet observers claim to learn from this war also call into question many of the innovations of the Gorbachev era such as defensive doctrine.

Inasmuch as this study was completed before the August revolution that followed the failed coup of August '19, it might seem that such discussions are forever irrelevant. But the strategic problems confronting the military and its civilian critics will not simply go away due to the revolution, though major changes certainly are occurring and will occur. Accordingly the professional Soviet military and its civilian commanders will necessarily sooner or later have to respond to the challenges of war 'in the third dimension' and high-tech conventional strike systems one way or another. Given the sophistication of Soviet military thinking and its lasting importance for military strategy and policy, the outcome of this continuing learning process cannot but have important repercussions for U.S. military thinking and policy.



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STEPHEN J. BLANK has been a National Security Affairs Analyst at the Strategic Studies Institute since 1989. Prior to this appointment Dr. Blank was Associate Professor for Soviet Studies at the Center for Aerospace Doctrine, Research, and Education of Air University at Maxwell AFB. Dr. Blank's M.A. and Ph.D. are in Russian History from the University of Chicago. He has published numerous articles on Soviet military and foreign policies, notably in the Third World, and is the author of a forthcoming study of the Soviet Commissariat of Nationalities and editor of books on Soviet foreign policies in Latin America and on the future of the Soviet military.

# **THE SOVIET MILITARY VIEWS OPERATION DESERT STORM: A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS**

## **Introduction.**

Analyzing Soviet 'lessons learned' from Operation Desert Storm at present resembles shooting at a moving target. This is because the largely secret professional Soviet analysis of the war is currently underway. The Soviet learning process will last for many years, as military writers use those lessons for partisan purposes or forecast future trends in warfare, often in the same work. We too are at a very early stage in assembling and processing reports and information from the theater. Soviet reports and observations will thus be even more partial and fragmented than ours.

Nevertheless these preliminary assessments, largely through the spring of 1991, suggest lines of argument that will surely appear later in greater depth, detail, and sophistication in Soviet military media. The grave Soviet economic-political crisis and its impact upon military budgets, force structures, and strategic planning will also force analysis of this war's lessons. Attempts to use the war's assessments to protect a service, collective military, or reform interest will certainly continue. And the very fact that our victory was a combined arms one that also employed space assets, EW (electronic warfare), and a healthy dose of covert and deception operations will lend some credence to both reformers and military modernizers. In other words, future analyses will likely either derive from the initial results of these analyses or will attack them. The entire process should open up new opportunities for analyzing how Soviet military planners assess modern war and their own needs, and make Moscow's defense policy process more transparent.

### **The War and Military Reform.**

Early Soviet commentary on Operation Desert Storm may be divided into two categories: polemical and professional. The polemical analyses relate to the intense domestic struggles over reform in general, and military reform in particular, during early 1991. The professional commentary analyzed Operation Desert Storm to learn lessons concerning both conventional and local war (i.e., war in a single state, generally in the Third World). The same article may contain both types of argument because operational analysis and threat assessment often serve to justify appeals for budgetary allocations to the military as a whole, or to a particular service.

The polemical literature mainly extrapolated specific lessons about the value of a professional army versus that of a Soviet-type conscript army, and on the performance of Soviet equipment, tactics, and strategy in Iraqi hands. Indeed, the Soviet press polemics reached the level of a veritable 'civil war' according to a KGB publicist.<sup>1</sup> Soviet reformers hailed the decisive U.S. victory as their victory over the military and right-wing forces opposed to reform in domestic and foreign policies, e.g., support for dictators like Saddam Hussein.<sup>2</sup> Reformers like Sergei Blagovolin, head of the military department of the influential Institute for World Economy and International Relations, claimed the war validated their calls for reform. Blagovolin stated that,

It's simply impossible to continue to reject the idea of deep military reform from bottom to top. (The Gulf War) plays in our favor because it's absolutely clear that these sophisticated weapons can't be used with high efficiency without an adequate level of preparation of personnel, and also demand a new kind of commander.<sup>3</sup>

Other reformers echoed this view. They also criticized the poor quality of Soviet weaponry and personnel and stated that the war will force Moscow to create a professional army composed of troops able to handle modern sophisticated weaponry.

Other military reformers go further and claim that the war's outcome invalidated the traditional Soviet strategy of using

infantry and huge armored forces backed up by massed artillery firepower. Iraq, they maintain, fought according to Soviet rules and teaching that are incompatible with contemporary military requirements.<sup>4</sup> Still other critiques of the Soviet military go beyond claiming that 'Iraq did everything according to the prescription of the Soviet General Staff' (a clearly polemical exaggeration for internal political purposes) to charge that Soviet equipment actually worsens each year and that the human composition of Soviet armed forces is no better than Iraq's. Soviet forces, using the same equipment and doctrines, and plagued with comparable shortcomings in 'the human factor,' must perforce be reorganized.<sup>5</sup>

Some civilian critiques accurately foretold the lines of the military response. That response took the form of arguing that:

- Iraq suffered from technological inferiority vis-a-vis the allies and did not have state of the art weaponry.
- Arab fighting men and officers are no good, hence their morale is poor.
- Iraqi strategy was poor and badly implemented.<sup>6</sup>

And this is exactly how defenders of the military argued their case (this excludes the ridiculous articles by General Filatov, editor of *Military-Historical Journal*, that the offensives had bogged down and that the allies would lose the war).<sup>7</sup>

No Soviet analyst disputes overall Western technological superiority. But some are at pains to redeem the 'honor' of individual Soviet weapon systems or alternatively to downgrade American ones like the Patriot, the Abrams M-1 Tank, or the M-16. Soviet military media even resorted to getting testimonials from Syria's defense minister attesting to the quality of Soviet systems.<sup>8</sup> He was not alone. Marshal Yazov said that the Soviet T-62 tank outperformed the M-1 in desert warfare.<sup>9</sup> Lower-level commentators repeated that assessment and expanded it to aircraft as well.<sup>10</sup> In all cases they stated that Iraqi equipment was generally older than allied equipment and that it was maldeployed by Saddam Hussein, or not set up for the kind of warfare employed by the allies.

SCUD missiles were also altered to reach Israel, thus decreasing their accuracy and impact.<sup>11</sup> The quality of the Iraqi soldier and his officers also came in for deserved criticism in these articles.<sup>12</sup>

Finally, in all cases, the defenders of Soviet military equipment and strategy opined that the West used the war, like past wars in the Middle East, for giving new weapons systems that are changing the nature of modern war a final operational test. These weapons range from anti-ship missiles, to helicopters, to reconnaissance and reconnaissance strike systems (RUKs in Russian).<sup>13</sup> Accordingly they discern two strategic threats as a result of the war. They are the actualization of a revolution in military affairs due to conventional high precision munitions and RUKs, as Marshal Ogarkov foretold, and second, the prospect of a permanent U.S. military presence in the Middle East.<sup>14</sup>

The latter threat takes the form of a permanent U.S. presence, mainly naval and air, in the Gulf, control over oil supplies that could be used later as energy blackmail against a USSR forced to import oil, or indirectly through pressure on Europe or Japan's trade with Moscow, and the continuing high level of arms transfers to Middle Eastern states. What particularly disturbs Soviet planners is the proximity of such threats and arms transfers to an inflamed Soviet Transcaucasia and Soviet Central Asia, which could be embroiled in an anti-Western, or anti-Soviet fundamentalist assault, or other scenarios aimed at breaking up the USSR.<sup>15</sup> These threat assessments link overtly polemical defenses of traditional military policies—including suspicion if not hostility towards America—to more professional analyses of the war's lessons.<sup>16</sup>

### **Professional Lessons.**

Threat assessments of the war connect purely polemical and political arguments about the war's lessons to more professional ones, and illuminate current Soviet security preoccupations. Many professional analyses are also politically motivated. They often represent efforts to secure support and/or funding for various services of the armed forces

or favored weapons systems. Officers and analysts proceed by extrapolating lessons from this, or other recent wars, or by developing threat assessments based on analysis of Western policies, strategies, and/or weapons. The Gulf War is no exception.

However, at the same time these analyses, though frequently partisan, also have a strong component of professional attempts to understand the war's lessons as the analyst sees them. It is both impossible and mistaken for us to divorce interest from analysis, and simply see these arguments exclusively as mirror images of American service rivalries. Though we have long known of existing service rivalries within the Soviet armed forces,<sup>17</sup> the staff culture and structure of military planning precludes a simple equation of interest with analysis, or a facile denigration of analysis as merely competition for assets, resources, and influence over policy and strategy.

For example, two very opposed analysts, Marshal Akhromeev and Blagovolin, view this crisis as having restored to currency the possibility and concept of regional conflict and local war. Our military victory apparently contradicts the new thinking's claim that only political means can be used to resolve conflicts. Military resolution of such conflicts is still necessary as a last resort. Implicitly this line also questions the validity of defensive doctrine as Moscow must, at least hypothetically, be ready to preempt an aggressor. Both men could easily subscribe to Akhromeev's framing of the point:

Today the thesis on war and on the continuation of politics is no longer generally valid. It is only partly valid—regarding regional military conflicts such as the war in the Persian Gulf that has just ended, and similar conflicts. By the way, experience has shown that today's regional conflicts cannot be definitively resolved by military means alone.<sup>18</sup>

Other analysts believe the war justifies their view that ballistic missile proliferation threatens the superpowers and other states, particularly in the Middle East. Therefore both superpowers should go beyond efforts to stop proliferation to erect a workable nonproliferation regime. Both sides need to

build a 'high-precision' ABM defense across Southern Europe (including the USSR). For Davydov that program means creating joint U.S.-European-Soviet security structures against Third World missile proliferation as soon as possible.<sup>19</sup> Here the wish is father to the thought, the wish being Soviet participation in the Atlantic Alliance and joint SDI with the United States.<sup>20</sup> Davydov implicitly shares with many military analysts the view that the war represented a testing ground or laboratory for new weapons and operational concepts, for instance ballistic missiles employed by Third World states.

Chief of Staff Moiseyev is only the most prominent military figure to see the war as a testing ground.<sup>21</sup> An armored warfare specialist, Lt. General Lyaschenko told Western reporters that he and, by implication, his superiors were strongly impressed by the coalition's antitank weaponry, particularly the precision antitank rocketry fired by Apache Helicopters and the A-10 aircraft. Others cite a broad range of systems: Tomahawk SLCM's, the SLAM (Standoff Launched Attack Missile) air-to-surface missile, the Lynx helicopter missile system, E-8 spy planes, fuel-air bombs, and so on.<sup>22</sup> Commentary on the air war also points to new weapons systems and their integration into mutually synergistic systems. Other Soviet observers, focusing on the ground war, or on its overall combined arms aspect, evince concern for their general planning based on the allied success.

Many were impressed by NATO's superior capability to project power. The successful diversion of over 200,000 troops plus support systems and supplies to a distant theater in a short time is an important capability that Moscow lacks.<sup>23</sup> Other such analyses unabashedly campaign for funds based on the war's supposed lessons. This is particularly true in the observations of Admiral Kapitanets, First Deputy CINC of the Navy. He not only views the Gulf War as a laboratory of new concepts, but also expects it to add to the U.S. Navy and armed forces' drive to establish worldwide naval dominance.<sup>24</sup> Despite such unabashed service boosterism, Soviet observers have reason to take note concerning U.S. sealift, airlift, naval air, and SLCM capabilities, as well as the Marines' amphibious capability, even though the latter was only used as a diversion.

Concern about U.S. and Western amphibious capabilities reflects a larger fear of the threat of deployment of highly mobile forces in a manner that forces the defense to spread its forces. Many Soviet analysts expected a major amphibious operation to liberate Kuwait. They viewed such operations in the context of a broader all-arms operation including EW. One writer predicted that a ground operation would develop in accordance with all the rules of modern battle. Extensive use would be made of maneuvering and flanking forces, both amphibious and vertical, and possible diversionary attacks upon one or more fronts or axes. Marines would mount an assault landing operation simultaneously with motorized infantry and armored formations to break through, breach, outflank, and ultimately envelop Iraqi forces. This ground operation would receive support from strategic and tactical army aviation, and carrier aviation.<sup>25</sup>

Another article expected amphibious landings as part of a broader ground offensive. This scenario embodied features that, to Soviet writers, typify post-1945 amphibious landings. Landings vary with the combatants' aims and strategic purposes; but there are common features in such disparate assaults like Inchon and the Anglo-French Suez operation in 1956. Pre-invasion *Maskirovka* measures were taken as large parties were readied for landings on equipped coastlines or directly in ports as in those operations. Much thought was given to pre-operational action to gain decisive superiority over the defenders. The author stressed the prospect of simultaneous air and sea landings with more and more storm groups landed from helicopters. Aviation's role in such landings has grown dramatically in order to land forces who can rapidly seize key points and secure the coastline. The growing emphasis on landing storm groups or subunits from helicopters or hovercraft has developed along with enhanced capabilities for placing up to 2000-2500 men ashore. Placement of 2-3 battalions of marines reinforced by tank regiments, 2-3 artillery batteries, 1-2 antiaircraft batteries, armored equipment, and armored tank and engineer subunits has become a reality. Marine brigades, operating as an independent operational-tactical landing force, can be landed with a minimum of equipment in 2-3 hours.<sup>26</sup>

Both these articles on amphibious operations proved to be only speculative. Nonetheless they both emphasized the combined arms, fixed wing, rotary wing, and naval aspects of such landing operations. While this may represent Soviet mirror-imaging of the concept of combined arms operations, the literature on the ground war also suggests that these are really Soviet concepts of Air/Land Battle (they now use the term, too) for amphibious operations. One pre-invasion analysis explicitly tied together amphibious landings with an 'Air/Land Battle' combined arms operation. The author predicted a double envelopment operation on land, a maneuver of forces and fire, vertical and horizontal attacks from the air and marines, frontal assaults by mechanized and tank forces, envelopments and flanking movements.<sup>27</sup>

Still another forecast accurately expected the main blow to come from the west, but predicted a landing of up to a Marine division on the coast of Kuwait, with both operations being supported by powerful air strikes on Iraqi positions. Here Air/Land Battle meant deep strikes through the front and the rear to block Iraqi forces from moving, break them up, and isolate them so that artillery and aircraft could finish them off. That would reduce the likelihood of infantry battles with high casualties.<sup>28</sup> So taken were some Soviet writers with the prospect of a marine landing that they invented an amphibious assault by Marine subunits to liberate Kuwait City, a landing in the city itself by Special Operations Forces, and the Marines' capture of Faylakh Island 40 miles to the south. According to this observer, "Characteristically, from the beginning of operation 'Desert Storm' the assault troops were working out combat operations under urban conditions."<sup>29</sup> Why this inaccurate report appeared cannot be determined. One possibility is that it testifies to the fear of amphibious landings on the Baltic or Black Sea Coasts followed by warfare in unstable republics that has recently gripped Soviet commanders' imaginations. This alleged 'threat' has led them to place four former armored divisions and their equipment in their Naval Infantry. Although this took place after the negotiation of the CFE treaty in 1990 and violated it, Soviet sources unanimously date their heightened interest in this so called threat from 1987.

In general, Soviet commentary on the combined arms nature of the war not only illustrates concern over Air/Land Battle, it also reveals differences in services' approach to modern conventional warfare. Admiral Kapitanets' stress on the bleak future for non-American navies exemplifies a view stressing the navy's primacy. Similarly Col. General A. Pavlov, before the land war, criticized the delay in launching it, and showed a preference for the traditional Soviet combined arms approach.<sup>30</sup> Pavlov mistakenly credited Iraq with superior capabilities in concealment and C<sup>2</sup> to deceive allied air forces about its missiles' location. Some writers also criticized the allies for not launching a blitzkrieg as in the Six-Day War and for adopting a more protracted campaign—here again showing a tendency to mirror-image their own preference for blitzkrieg type operations. But most truly professional Soviet commentary on the war focused on the critical lessons of the air war and its linkages with EW (as Moscow uses the term) and the advent of the reconnaissance-strike system as a reality, not just an analytical concept.

### **The Revolution in Warfare and Desert Storm.**

The most professional analyses tied together air, air defense, EW, space, and high-precision weaponry as harbingers of future wars. They vindicated Marshal Ogarkov's forecasts in the 1980s about future war due to the scientific technological revolution in warfare. The more professional post-war Soviet commentary on the war and allied strategy increasingly focused on the force multipliers provided by high-tech systems and networks. Many of these articles were also political because they aimed to strengthen the Soviet air defense forces (Voiska PVO).

While a consensus exists concerning the air operation and related subjects, there also exist substantial differences of opinion concerning these factors' future significance. This fact must be kept in mind because these doctrinal struggles will likely continue in future analyses and debates over force structures and allocations. There does seem to be agreement that the allies obtained operational-tactical, if not strategic, surprise in the air. This success is variously attributed to allied disinformation tactics, or more often to the intensive

preparation of targets by using space reconnaissance and EW, jamming being specifically mentioned.<sup>31</sup> The war's outcome backs up advocates of actions to support EW's growing importance and status of an independent strategic mission in wartime.<sup>32</sup>

The growing importance and military use of space and EW (which in Soviet terms comprises EW, ECM, and ECCM) has led to calls to reorient military investment and force structures. In 1990, Soviet space commanders and Moiseyev indicated that space was a force multiplier of 50-100 percent. Now observers of Desert Storm state that since 1970 the United States has more than trebled the combat potential of motorized infantry and mechanized divisions by using modern electronics.<sup>33</sup> Lt. General S. Bogdanov, Chief of the General Staff's Operational-Strategic Center, also stressed the importance of space and its integration into a system of combined arms including intellectualized systems optimized for combat in particular local theaters.

1. I will remind you that what U.S. specialists understand by the term "star wars" is the large-scale use of means of armed struggle in space and from space. And by calling the conflict in the Persian Gulf the first war of the "space era" representatives of the U.S. armed forces command are evidently seeking to emphasize the importance of the use of space means in that war and their weighty contribution to enhancing the effectiveness of combat operations by aircraft and ground groupings of the multinational force. Reconnaissance from space really was the main means of obtaining information on the position and condition of Iraqi troops. The extensive use of space communications and navigation systems ensured the steady control of the troop groupings of the multinational force—which, of course, promoted success.<sup>34</sup>

2. The most important conclusion from the Persian Gulf crisis is evidently that every modern local conflict or war will be prosecuted using non-standard methods and new forms of using armed forces. And, at the same time, within the framework of military operations the proportion of the contribution of the various branches of the armed forces to defeating the enemy will depend each time on the specific military-political aims of the war, the conditions of the situation, and the designs behind the sides' actions. It is necessary to proceed from the premise that modern war is a war of intellects at all levels of leadership and execution, of "intellectual" means of armed struggle.<sup>35</sup>

Bogdanov evaded traditional concerns to assign priority ranking for a separate service in combat. Though he concedes the ground forces' determining role in achieving the ultimate goals is still valid, he agreed that objective conditions are pushing aircraft to the fore as the most long-range and maneuverable means of struggle.<sup>36</sup> His real objective is to devise flexible force packages using all arms, including space and EW, optimized for particular theaters. Then the interaction of a force package's component parts, its system's performance, will be of decisive importance. Bogdanov here aligns his, and presumably at least a part of the General Staff's, thinking with preexisting views that the USSR must move into space, automated systems, electronics, and so on to optimize its force structure and embrace the intellectualization of warfare and weapons systems.<sup>37</sup>

The issue goes beyond recognizing that EW's failure means that the Air Defense Force cannot perform its mission.<sup>38</sup> Bogdanov took Ogarkov's forecasts about science and technology's impact upon modern warfare at least a step further if not more. He postulates an objective pressure for Moscow to move into these 'new frontiers' lest it be utterly vulnerable to conventional attacks or local wars on its periphery. He also says the war will not impel serious correction to the official General Staff military reform program.<sup>39</sup> That is because the program is oriented towards achieving the goals implicit in his analysis. However, the apparent U.S. inclination to resolve local wars by force, or the threat of force, does have an impact on Soviet military planning because 'it will oblige us to take a more considered attitude' towards reducing Soviet armed forces.<sup>40</sup>

Other Soviet observations about the air war in the immediate post-war phase also moved from analysis to calls for action at home. Those calls were more connected than Bogdanov's to particular service's needs. Yazov and many observers agreed that the air defense needs serious attention and presumably investment to withstand any surprise or unexpected aggression. This is the case even as other forces' decline.<sup>41</sup> But Yazov denied that the war signified some sort of revolutionary departure from the past. However the Chief

of the Air Forces' Main Staff, Lt. General A. Malyukov, used the war to distance himself from both Bogdanov and Marshal Yazov. Malyukov's writings hint at rivalry between the Air Force (VVS) and Air Defense Forces in strategic assessment and competition for scarce funds.

Malyukov reverses much of the usual Soviet approach to operational analysis by claiming that the air operation or air war alone secured the major objectives. He conceives the air operation to be the systematic interaction of aerial platforms and their backup, support, and maintenance systems. He duly called for optimizing the balance of the Air Force between combat and support means, charging that NATO has resolved this problem. He thus criticized the military procurement system that long placed undue priority upon turning out weapons and relegated operational and technical backup systems to the background. Now it is clear that the latter have material, direct, and immediate bearing on the effectiveness of combat equipment. For example, military transport aviation, long a weakness of Soviet forces, is needed for both peacetime and wartime operations, as the war showed.<sup>42</sup> Not only must this balance exist within the Air Force, there also must be upgraded pilot training, logistical support, and the integration of air power technology and firepower with effective command and control. Unusual for a Soviet commander, Malyukov also criticized Iraqi commanders for relying excessively on ground forces and downgrading air while the allies raced forward to new concepts of war.<sup>43</sup>

Malyukov criticized Yazov's (and Moiseyev's) more traditional approach. Clearly he favors phasing state-of-the-art systems into the Air Forces where possible so that existing systems are not denigrated excessively. In sum he argued for a balanced but modernizing R&D effort through a reformed procurement system that will proportionately balance old and new weapons. His articles, therefore, apparently signify both a critique of the procurement system, and discord with Yazov, Moiseyev, and the Army, who maintain more traditional approaches. They still see ground forces as king of the battlefield and the tank as its queen, or else are wedded to the existing procurement structure.<sup>44</sup>

General Tretyak, the CINC of the PVO forces, also called for continued modernization of, and investment in, his forces. He warned that failure in technological competition would place Soviet security in a situation similar to Iraq's which stopped developing its air defenses with visible and tragic results.<sup>45</sup> He stressed the new stealth technology: the F-117 fighter, Cruise missiles (HARM, Tomahawk), powerful jamming equipment, special EW aircraft, AWACS, OTH radars, space based reconnaissance, and precision-guided munitions as threats and fundamentally new strike platforms directed against Iraq and potentially the USSR.<sup>46</sup> Tretyak, like Malyukov and Bogdanov, claims this war demonstrated the systems that Ogarkov foresaw, but unlike them demands that investment go to the PVO forces, not the Air Force.

In the roundtable where he spoke, Tretyak's subordinates added equally revealing 'lessons' of the war. Major General A.N. Dubrov mentioned the need to reduce redundant air defense C<sup>2</sup> organs and large strategic formations as part of the overall reduction in forces of the PVO and Soviet military. But he warned that the war shows that a reduction in control organs must take place only where strict vertical subordination of all troop organs to command decisions continues. Dubrov wishes to retain traditional C<sup>2</sup> structures by tying reduction of control organs to simultaneously increasing the pool of automated control systems, their modernization, and introduction into troop formations.<sup>47</sup> Other participants of the roundtable used the war against civilian reformers, thus tying professional to political analyses.

### **Soviet Analyses of Future War.**

In virtually all of the public analyses there is little mention of Iraqi strategic failures. Few military analysts are willing, and evidently few civilian ones are able, to explain why Iraq performed so badly. For the most part the arguments follow the lines mentioned above. This attempt to provide a sanitized picture of Soviet weapons' capabilities and of tactical and strategic concepts recalls the similar Soviet response to the 1982 Israeli-Syrian air conflict that also ended in disaster for the USSR's ally, Syria.<sup>48</sup> Either the military is unable or unwilling to grasp and certainly to disseminate these lessons

to the public and its commanding officers, NCOs, and soldiers. The political reasons for such hesitancy or 'learned incapacity' are quite obvious given the intense political struggle over security policy in general that coincided with the Gulf crisis.

More private conversations with Soviet officers at the U.S. Army War College and National Defense University, in March 1991, indicate more profound perspectives. The Soviet speakers at these meetings, particularly Major General Slipchenko of the Voroshilov Staff Academy of the General Staff, opined that Saddam Hussein had no military strategy to speak of. Rather he had a political strategy. He evidently believed we would not attack and that even if we did the political pressures he could thereby generate would prevent an allied victory. Less convincingly he also said that Soviet analysts had predicted the course of the war in September 1990. However, his operational analysis at these meetings and that of Soviet military expert John Hines, based on his talks with Soviet officers and officials, suggest deeper perspectives on future war. Those analyses comport with the increased importance of EW, space, PGMs, and automated control systems as synergistic force multipliers. Their analyses also coincide with Malyukov's notion that Douhet's prophecies concerning the independent air operation have now come true. One must assume that Slipchenko voiced the General Staff's conclusions, which are not necessarily a true reflection of allied operations or lessons.

Slipchenko stated that the war demonstrated the changing nature of attack and of warfare in general. The former stereotype of a ground invasion after a 3-5 day air operation is now unnecessary. Instead a large automated air and space force can act alone. Since true aerospace warfare is a reality as the 6-week air war in the Gulf showed, in the future, massive strikes, *including space based attacks, and concentrated land, sea, air, and space strikes against targets become possible.* He was impressed by the fact that we needed no surge in space launches to achieve these strategic results. Existing space assets sufficed to give allied air forces the capability to generate so many sorties—a capability that clearly surprised Soviet analysts. In suppression of enemy air defense (SEAD)

operations, Radio-Electronic Warfare (the Soviet term for EW), and helicopters can act decisively along with unmanned strike systems. These combined arms strike systems can and probably will target air defenses, bases, and missile platforms, the rear, C<sup>3</sup>I targets, enemy infrastructure, and energy sources.

Slipchenko went on to say that in the future, all services' military targets will be targeted by space-based reconnaissance and will be hit by strikes. This represents the reality of Ogarkov's RUK in modern combat. Thus a new type of conventional war embracing land, sea, air, and space is upon us. We need to study how to prevent such a war because it will feature PGMs, DEW systems, laser beams, accelerated robotics, EW, artificial intelligence, space, automated air, land, and naval systems; large troop formations and other targets will be obliterated. Automated platforms and strike systems—Ogarkov's RUK system—make all targets vulnerable. No longer will there be a front or a rear. Rather there will be targets and non-targets which can be precisely located. PGMs erase distinctions between tactical and strategic strikes and targets, and between offense and defense. Nuclear weapons might be used in the final stage, either alone or with ground forces. Finally this war forces us to rethink the traditional concept of victory; i.e., demolition of enemy armies, economy, and political systems by occupation, because strike systems could accomplish most, if not all, of these goals on their own.

At the NDU session, John Hines concurred that the war makes distinguishing defensive from offensive systems moot and indicated that the new concept of *Vozdushnaia-Kosmicheskaja Voina* (Air-Space war) intrigued him. The Gulf War illustrated the greater importance of accuracy over distance rather than mass, and the essential importance—cited in Soviet works—of the mobility of fire platforms and systems that can only be destroyed by similar systems and platforms. The blinding of PVO forces by destroying C<sup>3</sup>I targets is an absolutely dominant requirement. The concept of an air campaign that blinds PVO, suppresses sortie generation, then hits radar again in order to generate

sorties against the entire air force and other high value targets was carried out by the allies even though it originally was a Soviet concept. Both Hines and the writings cited here strongly imply a fast-eroding Soviet confidence in their ability to carry this out, let alone ride out an allied attack.

Hines confirmed that superiority in C<sup>3</sup> and EW capabilities could be exploited to achieve, at least, tactical surprise as in the Gulf. Superiority in PGM technology could lead to strikes at nuclear weapons or nuclear C<sup>3</sup> systems as part of a temptation to escalate by using PGMs preemptively or during intra-war escalation. This concern applies to heavily armed states like the superpowers. Hines' last conclusion fits even more into the most sophisticated Soviet analyses. Qualitative improvements must take precedence over merely quantitative ones that trigger everyone's fears. *The single most important area of qualitative competition is in automation, electronics, C<sup>3</sup>, and miniaturization.* Reasonable sufficiency becomes insufficient since the idea of enforcing economies through sufficiency of systems is eclipsed by the need to compete qualitatively. Such systems are very costly and the USSR is particularly stressed in all areas of technological and military competition now and for the future.<sup>49</sup> If this is the case, Hines' conclusions also imply that defensive doctrine, as suggested above, also can no longer adequately meet the needs of Soviet planners since sudden long-range strike systems can prevent the defense from retaliating.

### **Desert Storm and the Future of Soviet Air/Land Battle.**

The foregoing analyses rightly focus on the synergies of air, air defense, new technologies and platforms, the RUK concept, EW, and space as force multipliers and expand upon pre-existing Soviet analyses.<sup>50</sup> Those analyses all refer to the multiplier effect these systems give to combat forces and see them as harbingers of future war.<sup>51</sup>

Soviet analysts of modern combined arms operations that characterized the land war in the Gulf also believe that a new type of war is at hand, a war which Reznichenko, the author of the Soviet textbook on tactics, calls "Deep Group Air/Land Battle." This analytical trend appeared in articles about

deployment of the U.S. Army and on the past and future conduct of Soviet Army operations that predated the war and foretold much of its course. Volouev asserts that the U.S. Army expects that confrontations in a TVD (the Theater of Strategic Military operations—a purely Soviet concept telling the reader that the argument also applies to the Soviet Army) will be highly mobile and aggressive. The front will be fragmented. Operations will occur along isolated, separate gaps in formations. PGMs will give combat operations the quality of tactical and operational focus that blurs distinctions between offense and defense, the front, flanks, and rear. Combat operations will become three-dimensional with width, depth, and height parameters. Strategic systems will perform tactical missions—something the VVS has been particularly keen on. Army aviation helicopters will repeatedly reduce by a factor of 8-10 the time needed to maneuver forces and assets on the battlefield. Air/Land Battle will become a means of destroying and defeating larger enemy formations in depth.

The essence of "Air-Land Battle" lies in highly mobile combat operations of Army formations, coordinated by objective, place and time and conducted jointly with supporting tactical aviation while using the entire arsenal of combat resources and electronic warfare in the interest of engaging the enemy over the entire depth of his operational disposition and defeating him in detail.<sup>52</sup>

The concept of Air/Land Battle presupposes the comprehensive coordination of efforts and forces, air, airmobile, air assault, special operations, and psyops combined with fire strikes, PGMs, and massed use of EW assets. *"The joint and coordinated use of them creates an opportunity not only to compensate for the weak points of each of them but also to obtain an additional mutually intensifying effect."* Volouev stressed the importance of airmobile assault forces, which can move repeatedly in helicopters. The use of 'mobile areas' for operations by them and special forces can disrupt enemy C<sup>3</sup>, cut off supplies, cripple platforms, impede the advance of reserves and place heavy psychological burdens on troops.<sup>53</sup>

Volouev clearly foretold many aspects of the land operation that took place about 6-7 months later, true despite the fact that

he probably was listing desiderata for the Soviet army, not just observing the U.S. Army. This is due to the fact that, as argued in Appendix A, our operations there, whether or not one calls them Air/Land Battle, clearly resemble much of current Soviet operational guidance for theater-strategic operations and offensives—a guidance that Soviet writers now also call Air-Land Battle. That does not validate Slipchenko's claim about a 1990 forecast of the war, but does suggest possible operational and perhaps even strategic congruence in superpower thinking.

Reznichenko's article on past and future Army operations also outlines the Soviet concept of Air-Land Battle before Desert Storm began. His concern is to improve the viability of Soviet armed forces' performance on the defensive. Using the 1941 example of when strategic surprise was inflicted upon Soviet forces, he finds that the causes for failure, then as now, go beyond maldeployed troop units or poorly prepared positions and fortifications. Soviet troops, he stresses, were not aligned, either in small or large strategic formations, to take full account of Germany's deep strike capability. Rifle divisions, which had a decisive role in defensive formations, had an extreme lack of striking power, and insufficient mobility, anti-air, and antitank capability. He stresses that these points still retain exceptional importance. One could easily cast the United States and Iraq as Germany and Russia respectively and validate his argument.

For offensive operations he emphasizes the contemporary importance of reliable fire engagement of the enemy and creation of mobile groups to break through. Today mobile formations enjoy a much higher maneuver potential than motorized rifle divisions do and can be used as assault landing-amphibious or army aviation units—airborne and heliborne forces.<sup>54</sup> Air defense's heightened role visibly derives from the experience of local wars and it and antiballistic missile defense are no longer support measures but are important parts of the combined arms battle and operation.<sup>55</sup>

He also outlines six fundamental trends in the development of operational art and tactics that can be presently discerned. Among them are the increased spatial scope of combined arms

battle and operations because airspace can be used for deep maneuver and deep strikes. Fire engagement and the wide use of aircraft to accomplish unit and formation combat missions are now commonplace. Combat is inconceivable without long-range delivery of fire. Local wars have demonstrated a sharp increase in the importance of ECM against radio-frequency objects. Thanks to wide deployment of electronics and PGM's, *"ECM becomes one of the basic components of the battle and operation called upon to disrupt enemy command and control and weapon control."* Forces' maneuver capabilities have reached unprecedented levels and led to the need to train officers to display initiative and to formulate a new theory of the tactics of combined arms battle, *"tactics of the deep group Air-Land Battle."* This combines all the new elements of war: ECM (electronic attack [in the original]), PGMs, including aircraft, tactical airborne assault forces, raiding detachments and special forces, decisive actions by combined-arms units and subunits simultaneously from the front, flanks, and rear. This entails,

Not a breakthrough in narrow sectors of a front with combat formations of subunits and even units essentially in a linear alignment, which we often observe in field training exercises, but the *simultaneous deep strike along axes by several small groupings* (emphasis in original), including subunits and units of different combat arms and army aviation (and on maritime axes also of the naval infantry), coordinated laterally and in depth.<sup>56</sup>

Reznichenko too foresaw much of the strategy and operational art of Desert Storm and future war. Moscow sees that we have carried out its force and operational art requirements for deep strike under the rubric of Air/Land Battle. "Moreover, we are doing it better than they could now *or for a long time to come*" (emphasis author). The technological revolution in warfare has led to Soviet inability to compete at the strategic conventional level no matter how powerful its doctrinal process is.

Accordingly future Soviet security planning, based on the capabilities revealed by this war, faces a bleak and literally unpredictable future.<sup>57</sup> Where the General Staff and MOD cannot determine what their resources and assets will be nor

the level of their future control over them, due to the current domestic crisis, doctrinal development and force planning are impossible. The threat may be known, but the means to defeat it cannot even be imagined. That is the situation today. Our victory in the Gulf only adds to Soviet defense planners' burdens. The standards with which their own thinking tells them they must compete and thus the threat to Soviet security appear ever more insuperable. For the foreseeable future the only means by which reliable Soviet security in a probably shrunken USSR may be guaranteed are collective security and nuclear deterrence. To a military which has already tried both strategies between 1933-63 and found them wanting, this is indeed a chilling conclusion.

### **Conclusions.**

On the basis of the preceding evidence the following conclusions seem warranted.

- At the war's start, civilian reformers attacked military procurement policy, force structure, and doctrine and sought to professionalize the armed forces and demilitarize security policy and the economy. Some also advanced their own ideas about future force packages, notably a joint superpower SDI regime against Third World states like Iraq. However, they soon apparently dropped out as military analysts came to dominate the media.

This suggests that before the August 1991 coup, civilian reformers were losing the battle to establish direct institutional control over the General Staff and the military on professional military issues. The prospect that the new 9+1 treaty will lead to republican and civilian control over budgets does not necessarily mean civilian control over professional issues as the military defines them. On the other hand, in the wake of this coup, pressure for such control above and beyond budget control may grow to the point where it will be implemented. Certainly the new union treaty will be written in order to control the military more tightly than before by reducing its budget, if not by instituting direct civilian control over policy.

- The military initially defended Soviet weapons systems and was largely silent about why Iraq failed. The general line was that Soviet equipment is not inferior to comparable American models and that Iraq did not have state-of-the-art systems like we did.<sup>58</sup> Lt. General Shtepa, Deputy Chief of the General Staff's Center for Strategic Operations Research, also stated that Iraqi officers' training by Soviet specialists was not the problem. Iraqi leadership ignored basic principles for effectively using the armed forces and that caused their defeat.<sup>59</sup> This line compares to that taken in 1982 after Syria's similar debacle. It indicates military leaders' continuing unwillingness to debate their critics seriously. This unwillingness has only grown with the apparent victory in the battle to continue the MOD's and General Staff's control over military policy.
- At the same time, many fractures exist in professional military assessments. This is particularly true regarding evaluation of the services' role in the war. The controversy between the Ground Forces and the Air Forces has reappeared. Army leaders still contend that their forces are necessary for a decisive victory over enemy forces and to occupy or liberate occupied territory. Therefore they should enjoy priority in regard to investment in tanks, armored platforms, and equipment.

Air commanders argue that the war heralds a future where forces can secure strategic objectives simply by a strategic aerospace operation linking together SEAD operations, attainment of air superiority, EW, space based reconnaissance and strike systems through advanced and automated C<sup>3</sup>I and electronic systems. This, they assert, points to new departures in warfare.

The General Staff appears concerned to avoid debilitating debates about the primacy of this or that system or service. It prefers to create flexible combined-arms packages tailored to mission and theater requirements. That requires forces that can deal with new technologically based threats from

long-range RUKs and PGMs and the revolution in warfare. This view, advanced by members of the General Staff Academy, is thus not only an air force one. Instead the service debate and struggle over allocations is tied to the vision of an ongoing revolution in science, technology, and thus warfare that presents the Soviet military with novel and unforeseen problems. For example, General Rodionov, commander of the Academy, observes that the situation in Europe is remarkably similar to that in the Gulf.

Previously, our troops stood in direct contact with NATO troops. In the event of a conflict, fronts and offensive and defensive operations on the ground would have arisen immediately with tactical and operational-tactical effects. But now the troops are separated by thousands of kilometers. They can come into contact only using intermediate range missiles and army aviation. During the first days of a war, the tactical effect will be nearly absent while the strategic component of the war will drastically increase. *Right now the General Staff is pondering all of this and it is being discussed among the military.*<sup>60</sup> (emphasis in original)

However, this debate concludes, clearly all the participants realize that the war has vindicated Ogarkov's forecasts about the technological basis of future war. Future war is now a reality. It must be faced and the threats of PGMs and RUKs must be met.

- The same debate applies to the Navy, as Admiral Kapitanets suggested. Early analyses suggest that amphibious forces' role in warfare will likely increase. The concern about amphibious forces seems to be part of the paranoia about landings on Soviet shores in support of broader strategic strikes, either to liberate republics or occupy territory.

Naval analysts believe that this war points to the future nature, scale, and methods of armed forces' operations, including naval forces, in local conflicts and wars. Air, land, and sea campaigns will include combined-arms offensive operations and amphibious landings that are either successive or interrelated by time, place and objectives. And that will be the basis for combat employment of the forces at least to the year 2000. The size of the naval force in the Gulf, larger than

anything since Vietnam, and new weapons indicate that the navy will acquire still greater importance as "the most versatile and mobile branch of the armed forces capable of accomplishing a wide range of missions both at sea and on land."<sup>61</sup>

- Analyses of the war's likely and actual operations show continuing interest in power projection forces and operations like amphibious and airborne and/or heliborne assault. Those would occur in either Third World locales or in Europe or the Far East. This is not because Moscow or the MOD is offensively minded. Rather, there appears to be a growing sense of threat from high-tech conventional and missile systems proliferation into the Middle East and South Asia that could drag Soviet forces into regional conflicts as well as a heightened sense of threat of surprise strikes from sea and air based platforms and amphibious operations. We cannot determine how much this perception is shaped by parochial concerns to win back major weapons programs and establish service primacy, or by a general sense of real threats to Soviet security. Nonetheless it exists and must be accounted for.
- Military men want to preserve Soviet friendship with Iraq and Syria and therefore have been remarkably quiet concerning their strategic blunders. This silence combines ideological and geopolitical motives and reflects their continuing hostility to military reform, new thinking, and the de-ideologization and demilitarization of Soviet foreign policies.
- Despite the service rivalries there is a consensus concerning issues that must be addressed by all the services, the General Staff, and the MOD. Airpower's capability to conduct a strategic operation on its own will undoubtedly focus major attention on upgrading air, air defense forces, C<sup>3</sup>I, space, EW, and naval air/air defense. The Soviets have accepted the synergy of

these forces as combat multipliers. They generally concur that these systems have grown from an operational form of support into a means of combat that is an independent operation.<sup>62</sup>

While analysts disagree whether or not this portends a revolution in warfare today and in 21st century warfare, there is general accord that the era of genuine aerospace warfare and the centrality of EW is upon us. They expect future wars to show an even greater importance of air, air defense, space, and EW.

- The Soviets analyzed the ground operations in terms of categories and perceptions that predated but quite accurately foretold those operations. Moscow clearly understands Air/Land Battle and views it in terms of ideas of the deep strike and combined arms offensive operations. But it cannot yet carry it out "on the ground." Many analysts anticipated speed and range of armored assaults and heliborne operations employed in Kuwait and grasp how important maneuver warfare strategies and forces are for rapid termination of victorious battles, operations, and campaigns. Their insights suggest the continuing validity and utility of such operations in local and theater-strategic conflicts. Enhanced air and sealift capabilities also figure prominently in these analyses to achieve the rapid insertion of troops and supplies to the theater.
- The use of all of these combined arms, from special forces to space-based RUK systems, contributed to the attainment of surprise at all levels, especially in the critical initial phases of the war. Long-range strike weapons from air, sea, and ground platforms may well suffice to terminate the war in that period making the initial period of war the only one of the conflict. The "laws of war" concerning the utility of surprise, covertness, and deception are still true. This fact, along with the forecasting of army and ground force operations, probably continues to persuade Soviet analysts that their fundamental analytic categories and their doctrinal

process as a whole are well founded and valid despite civilian criticism.

- This entire crisis and war signifies that "new thinking" notwithstanding, local wars are still amenable, at least in part, to purely military solutions. Thus the military must still be ready for such contingencies. In turn, that argument justifies continuing along the lines mapped out by the General Staff and the MOD in implementing future reforms in doctrine, strategy, force structure, composition, quantity, and policymaking. Of even greater importance is that the outcome of this war makes both reasonable sufficiency and defensive doctrine questionable as adequate bases for defending the USSR. The attacks on both predated the war but can only grow in intensity as the war's full significance is assimilated.<sup>63</sup>
- Soviet military commanders remain conservative in their approach. They have confidence in their analytical processes regarding the war and its lessons. This probably holds true for more service-oriented analysts too since they employed that analytical process for their service interest based on "objective" technical and military capabilities displayed during the war. Service rivalries will continue and grow more acute in a time of shrinking budgets, a factor making for more open and transparent debate among military men and civilians. But the categories within which these debates will occur will probably show little change nor will the analytical process of threat analysis and assessment likely change qualitatively.

Soviet military leaders may believe they know what needs to be done in the wake of the war. Their problem is that they cannot now or in the future realize those lessons. Economic-technological backwardness and stringencies, and the lack of basic internal political consensus make a catch-up any time soon unlikely. This is the case despite calls for investments in the systems we employed so effectively in Kuwait and Iraq. Rather it appears the army will be slashed to

accommodate existing long-range strike and power projection systems of the Navy, PVO, and the VVS, EW, and space forces. Deterrence will probably be based on better but fewer nuclear systems due to the START treaty and systems modernization. Thus Moscow may not be able to implement the lessons it has learned or even assimilate their full meaning. While the war's lessons are being debated and analyzed by Western and Soviet analysts,<sup>64</sup> for Soviet military leaders the notion that it has led to a new world order is unlikely to be accepted calmly. Our victory has added to their pessimistic threat perceptions. When our challenges are added to their searing internal crises, the international regime that they see emerging may be new and global in scope, but it hardly appears to be order.

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64. Cutshaw, pp. 314-318; Jeffrey Record, "Why the Air War Worked," *Armed Forces Journal International*, April 1991, pp. 44-45; Air Vice Marshal R.A. Mason, "The Air War in the Gulf," *Survival*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 3, May-June 1991, pp. 211-229; William J. Taylor Jr. and James Blackwell, "The Ground War in the Gulf," *ibid.*, pp. 230-245.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **DESERT STORM: A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE SOVIET SIDE**

The allied operation in Kuwait and Iraq will undoubtedly be acclaimed as a masterpiece of military art in its concept, structure, and execution. As such, its totality and its component parts will undergo careful study in military academies for years to come. It also is rightly being hailed as a vindication of the U.S. Army's Air-Land Battle doctrine. All this is true, but it should also be kept in mind that this campaign also represents the stuff that Soviet military dreams are made of. Students of Soviet military thinking know that for over 60 years Soviet military thinkers have developed and refined the concepts of deep strike in warfare. Their aim, as was ours, is to bring about a rapid destruction of the enemy's armed forces, typically through a strategic encirclement. This encirclement entails the combined use of all arms, army, navy, air force, naval air, marines (Naval Infantry in Soviet parlance), and special forces (the dreaded Spetsnaz in Soviet terms) in an operation characterized by deception operations, surprise strikes, high mobility, airborne and heliborne operations in the enemy's rear and flanks, and the use of special forces to provide reconnaissance to the combat forces from inside the enemy's positions.

Every single one of these forces was deployed by the allied command. Special Forces provided the necessary intelligence, land and deck-based aircraft conducted strategic bombing, close air support, suppression of enemy artillery, and anti-aircraft missions, and drove off Iraq's Air Force in the initial phase of war. All these operations, combined undoubtedly with superior Radio-Electronic Warfare as the Soviets call it, quickly established the air superiority necessary to achieve strategic surprise and deploy troops and logistics in unexpected zones where Iraq could no longer see them.

These initial operations followed not only American but also Soviet requirements for achieving air superiority by counter-air and counter command, control, communications, and intelligence operations that allow Soviet (i.e., allied forces in this case) forces freedom to maneuver in the theater without hindrance.

Once the land assault began, both Air-Land battle and Soviet doctrine required its coordination with heliborne landings well back in the enemy rear together with heliborne, air assault landings to catch enemy forces moving from the rear, neutralize key targets and, in conjunction with aerial interdiction, isolate the battlefield from the rear. The unprecedented scale and scope of the heliborne operation to set up advance bases and then leapfrog ahead while preparing logistics on the spot for advancing forces, and the previous logistical miracle (the only appropriate word) of setting up a portable logistics capability at the front for 60 days in the desert, surpasses even Soviet expectations of what the requirements for and capabilities of heliborne assaults are.

The use of the amphibious operation as a decoy and the surprise movements of troops through areas that were not expected to be attacked also fit right in with Soviet requirements for a strategic operation as does the fact that naval artillery and air played an important role in suppressing enemy artillery and air defenses as well as command, communications, and control. The use of the special forces also combined American and Soviet stipulations for their use as a reconnaissance force and for liaison with our coalition partners. The very success of coalition warfare here stands out in stark contrast to what we now know Soviet plans for coalition warfare in Europe were during the existence of the Warsaw Pact. In that contingency Moscow would simply have overridden their "allies'" control over their own militaries and forcibly assimilated them into the Red Army to prevent their defection or defense of their own homeland. Though nominally coalition warfare, the Warsaw Pact scenario represents something closer to the reality of the Iraqi army, much of which clearly had no stomach for the fighting and was coerced into military service.

Finally, the structure of General Schwarzkopf's command and his relationship to the U.S. national command authorities, President Bush, Secretary Cheney, and General Powell, overseeing the Joint Chiefs of Staff, corresponds to that of a Soviet commander of a theater of strategic military actions to the Soviet General Staff. Indeed, General Schwarzkopf's independence in commanding his forces, and his overall strategic plan that combined arms in optimum fashion in a single grand concept, represents the ideal that such a theater commander should strive to realize according to Soviet doctrine. The coalition's performance, from the high command on down, thus represents a real maximizing of the synergistic capabilities and benefits that truly combined arms operations and the unity of mobility and firepower provide to a commander.

Such an analysis of the campaign undoubtedly has been made in Moscow and will be made in greater depth as the details are made public. The point of this observation, that in a sense we beat Moscow at its own game, is not to boast about American superiority. Obviously, few military commanders are likely to be as deluded about their own and enemy capabilities as Saddam Hussein was. Rather, the coalition victory over naked aggression and Soviet efforts to rescue at least a part of the aggressor's military-political capability is also a victory over the reactionary, militarist, and chauvinist forces who made the coups of January and August 1991. Those events clearly indicated the kinship felt by Saddam Hussein towards them. By beating their client and ally we demonstrated to them our capability and resolve to keep the political pressure on for a reformed and more democratic Soviet state. President Bush's stance in the recent August coup again demonstrated that resolve and materially aided in the failure of the coup. Our victory then was a victory for the democratic forces inside the USSR. Perhaps it came just in time then to avert a further lurch to the right. So too will the failed August coup be a victory for democracy and international peace if they and we can exploit it to help construct a new democratic order in the Soviet Union. Such an order will not only help bring peace to the USSR but also to its immediately adjoining neighbors, Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

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